



Nevada Veterans Services Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: March 5, 2009

Location of Meeting:

Capitol Annex Media Room
101 North Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Video Conferenced to:

Governor's Office Conference Room
555 East Washington Avenue, Suite 5100
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Roll Call

Present: Margaret Puccinelli
Scott Smith
Bill Baumann
Ron Gutzman
Gina Crown
Mike Musgrove
Sean Fellows

Absent: Assemblywoman Kathy McClain
Senator Terry Care

Pledge of Allegiance

Guest and representative introduction:

Tim Tetz – Executive Director – Nevada Office of Veterans Services
Carole Turner – Deputy Executive Director - Nevada Office of Veterans Services
DeeDra Cornelius – Executive Assistant - Nevada Office of Veterans Services
Gary Bermeosolo – Administrator – Nevada State Veterans Home
Bill DiBenedetto – Public Relations & Media Advisor – Nevada Office of Veterans Services
Caleb Cage – Senior Policy Advisor – Lieutenant Governor's Office

Approval agenda for March 5, 2009:

Bill Baumann – Made a motion to accept the agenda
Ron Gutzman – Motion was seconded
Decision: Unanimous consent

Approval of December 5, 2008 minutes:

Mike Musgrove – Made a motion to accept the minutes

Sean Fellows – Motion was seconded

Decision: Unanimous consent

Changes Requested:

It was noted the data Don Iddings' provided in his report, at the December 5, 2009 meeting, was three years old or more.

NOVS Agency Reports:**Fiscal Report:**

Report given by Tim Tetz - Nevada Office of Veterans Services

(All items and charts can be found in the Commission book.)

Overview:

1. No actual fiscal report was handed out.
2. It was noted the Agency may need to go to the Interim Finance Committee for money in budget account 2560
3. The Agency is still waiting on some over due cemetery reimbursements from the VA.
4. The Agency is cutting back on travel money for its meetings to stay within the budget.
5. Cemetery Gift Account Information:
 - a. The account will be used for Memorial Day
 - b. There have been no draws from the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) this year.
 - c. The Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) will draw \$100,000 plus for fencing due to the Public Works Board not accepting it as CIP.
 - d. VA Cemetery Grant Program has agreed to reimburse for the fencing at the SNVMC during the next project in fiscal 2010.
6. Veteran Gift Account Information:
 - a. This account was used to purchase the mobile outreach vehicle.
 - b. The account was also used to fund the Legislative event.

Guardianship Program Status Report:

Report given by Tim Tetz – NOVS Executive Director

(All items and charts can be found the Commission book.)

Overview:

1. The program no longer has an active list; all of the people still in the program are currently in transition.

2. The VA is discharging 14 people from NOVS though it could take some time.
3. Salt Lake City will be handling the fiduciary needs of those 14 people.

Nevada State Veterans Home (NSVH) Administrator Report:

Report given by Gary Bermeosolo – Nevada State Veterans Home Administrator

(All items and charts can be found in the Commission book)

Overview:

1. The Administrator for the Nevada State Veterans Home attended the National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH).
2. The demographics of the Home were discussed.
3. The Home currently has 94% occupancy with an average of 6 deaths per month.
4. Announced the passing of Dotty, the chair of the Veterans Council within the Home.
5. During the last survey at the Home, there were only 2 citations reported:
 - a. The load limit on the generator
 - b. A support device used which was not part of the original care plan for the particular resident.
6. A two year old law has finally gone into effect and the Home will now receive VA reimbursement for nursing home care.
 - a. Retroactive to March 17, 2007.
 - b. The reimbursement goes to the veteran, not the Home.
 - c. If the veteran has passed away, the family is then reimbursed.
7. NSVH is holding on to its 5 star status; they are 1 of 4 homes reviewed each month.
8. There are 3 categories of veterans allowed in the Home at this time:
 - a. Veterans;
 - b. Spouses;
 - c. Gold Star Parents:
 1. The law regarding Gold Star Parents currently states the parent has to have lost "all children" to be eligible; this needs to be changed to "a child."
9. The dining room in the Home is expected to open March, 16, 2009 with a ribbon cutting ceremony.
 - a. The dining room will start serving 3 meals per day on March 17, 2009.

10. The Mariner Cove remodeling project will be paid for by gift funds.
11. Online training at the Home is moving forward with 12 sessions available.
12. The CNA career ladder is in place.
 - a. 7 of 8 positions have been filled.
 - b. The last position to fill is a night shift position.
13. The software conversion is moving forward with the expectation of all electronic records in the Home by 2010.
14. The Home continues to achieve good results with Pinnacle Consulting.

Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) Report:

Report given by Tim Tetz – NOVS Executive Director

(All items and charts can be found in section 2 of the Commission book)

Overview:

1. The monthly statistics report was reviewed.
2. Frank Salvas, of the VA Cemetery Grant Program, visited the cemetery on February 26, 2009 and is working on a plan for funding the cemetery expansion.
3. NNVMC can not bury in the single casket area until the expansion is complete.
4. The flagpole and lighting project within the cemetery has been fully funded.
 - a. The poles are up.
 - b. The lighting is now being installed.
5. The cemetery will soon be preparing for its Memorial Day ceremony.

Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) Report:

Report given by Jack Porrino – SNVMC Superintendent

(All items and charts can be found in the Commission book.)

Overview:

1. SNVMC is still on a 20 minute service rotation each day.
2. They continue to be the 2nd busiest cemetery in the nation.
3. The City of Boulder City wants the cemetery to cover curb installation, gutter installation, and half of the road installation.
 - a. The VA will reimburse for this project through another project in the future.
4. SNVMC has less than 4 years left in space for casket burials.
5. SNVMC has less than 2 years left in space for cremains
6. Announced the addition of a new member to their cemetery committee; Phill LaChapelle.
 - a. He will replace Sam Ruvolo's position on the committee.

7. SNVMC will also be preparing soon for their Memorial Day ceremony.

Veterans Services Program Report:

Report given by Tim Tetz for Jeanette Rae – Veterans Services Program Manager

(All items and charts can be found in the Commission book.)

Overview:

1. The VSOs continue to do veteran outreach projects.
2. There have been some GwoT claim changes.
3. The installation of new software for the VSOs is behind schedule which is causing some overtime for the staff.
4. There is not enough staff to cover the amount of claims needing to be processed
 - a. Currently they are processing around 1000 to 1200 claims per VSO.
5. Outreach Vehicle:
 - a. The 2009 tour schedule poster board shown to the Commission.
 - b. The outreach vehicle is a mobile office which will be available to take claims and hand out brochures at each event.
6. Announced the Veteran Health Fair will be held on May 30, 2009.
 - a. The Commission requested a member attend this fair. Ron Gutzman volunteered to attend and Gina Crown volunteered to attend in Ron's place if he could not make it.

Scott Smith – made a motion for attendance

Gina Crown – motion was seconded

Decision: Unanimous

Executive Director Report:

Report given by Tim Tetz – Executive Director

(All items and charts can be found in the Commission book.)

Overview:

1. Legislative Report:
 - a. A summary sheet of veteran related bills NOVS is currently tracking was given to the Commission members.
 - b. Letters and veteran related information was given to the Commission members in the packets provided.
 - c. Announced AB3, regarding natural green turf in the cemeteries, passed with amendments.

- d. Legislative bill SB71 was discussed regarding the definition of a veteran.
 - 1. The Commission requested a motion to proceed with SB71 using the Federal definition:

Bill Baumann – Made a motion to use the Federal definition
Gina Crown – Motion was seconded
Decision: Unanimous approval with one opposition
 - 2. The Commission requested a motion to include the Cold War era in the definition as in the Federal definition:

Mike Musgrove – Made a motion to include the Cold War era in the definition
Sean Fellows – Motion was seconded
Decision: Unanimous approval
- e. Commission members agreed to give their support at the budget meeting on March 6, 2009.
 - 1. Scott Smith and Mike Musgrove will attend the budget meeting with the Director of NOVS.
- f. The Global War on Terror (GwoT) Summit is still in the works.
 - 1. The target date for the summit is September 12, 2009.
 - 2. NOVS is providing financial support.
 - 3. NOVS will provide resources through their Public Relations/Media Advisor.

Deputy Executive Director Report:

Report given by Carole Turner – Deputy Executive Director
(All items and charts can be found in the Commission book.)

Overview:

- 1. The Women Veterans Summit will be held March 7, 2009.
 - a. Newsletters have gone out.
 - b. So far there have been 136 registrants.
 - c. KRVN will do a public announcement the Friday before.
- 2. The Commission condolence cards were created; examples were handed out to the Commission members.

- a. These cards will go out to the next of kin of veterans who have passed away in the Nevada State Veterans Home, on behalf of the Commissioners.
- 3. UNLV Student Veterans Organization:
 - a. This organization will have its first meeting on their veteran monument on March 11, 2009.
 - b. They hope to unveil the monument by November 11, 2009.

Update on Veterans Home in Sparks, NV:

Report given by Tim Tetz and Gary Bermeosolo

Overview:

- 1. This Home was accepted as a GreenHouse® project in October 2008.
- 2. The new Home is down on the list for VA funding until it receives its State funding.
- 3. The Agency is asking for a \$275 million appropriation for the Home for next year.
- 4. The Agency is still has the mental health campus for placement of the future Home, but continues to look at other possible areas.
- 5. \$150 million in stimulus funds has been received for the Northern Home.

Commission and Organization Reports:

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Update:

Report given by Bill Baumann

Overview:

- 1. Midwinter National Conference:
 - a. The DAV submitted their top 5 priorities to the Congressional committee.
- 2. Concurrent Receipt:
 - a. \$174 million in retro-active payments have been received.
- 3. Handed out and discussed their statistics report including volunteer hours.

American Legion Update:

Report given by Ron Gutzman

Overview:

- 1. Post 911 GI Bill benefits
 - a. There will be an increase in the program.
 - b. Additional funds and stipends will be needed.

2. The American Legion will continue its support of the Global War on Terror Summit.
3. They are supporting the Armed Forces with equipment.
4. The American Legion is involved in the flag amendment.
5. They have updated their book on illegal immigration.
6. The American Legion is pushing issues on mental health and quality of life.
7. Currently planning their convention which will be in Carson City in June 2009.
8. They will continue to support NOVS in its legislative efforts.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Update:

Report given by Mike Musgrove

Overview:

1. The VFW continues to support veteran issues.
2. They will be addressing Congress this month.
3. They also have a back log on claims processing.
4. Discussed the CBoC quotas.

Future Meetings:

Upcoming Commission Meetings:

1. **June 4, 2009 – Carson City, NV**
Video conferenced to Grant Sawyer Building in Las Vegas, NV.
2. **September, 11 2009 – TBD**

Upcoming Events to Note:

1. **September 12, 2009 – GWoT Summit – TBD**

Adjournment:

Margaret Puccinelli, Vice Chair – Adjourned the meeting